



Bureau of HIV and STD Prevention

HIV/STD Clinical Resources Division
HIV/STD Epidemiology Division
HIV/STD Health Resources Division

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HIV/STD Policy No. 522.001

REIMBURSEMENTS TO VOLUNTEERS INVOLVED IN COMMUNITY PLANNING OR DIRECT CLIENT SERVICE

PURPOSE

This policy establishes the methods by which reimbursement for business related costs for volunteer services may be processed through the Texas Department of Health (TDH), Bureau of HIV and STD Prevention (Bureau). The policy affects consortia, community planning groups (CPG) and other organizations using the services of volunteers to conduct business. The policy will include the following: what information is needed to promote uniformity in reimbursement requests; what documentation must be submitted for reimbursement; who may be reimbursed for business related expenses, and what expenditures are reimbursable. The policy will also clarify the time lines required for submitting reimbursement requests.

BACKGROUND

There are various organizations across the state, whose members serve on a voluntary basis, that are responsible for planning, monitoring and evaluating HIV prevention activities and service delivery. In addition, some contractor organizations have volunteers who provide direct service assistance to HIV/STD clients. All of these volunteers may incur program related expenses in the process of fulfilling their duties or providing a service. The volunteers may be reimbursed for these costs provided the processes for incurring the costs and for submitting the costs for reimbursement are followed. Forms and associated documentation are filed with the administrative agency or banker agency (contract administration agency).

AUTHORITY

Ryan White Care Act and Amendments of 1996; Health and Safety Code, Chapter 85, §§85-031-85.044; Health and Safety Code, Chapter 12, §12.052; Uniform Grant and Contract Management Act (UGCMA); Uniform Grant Management Standards (UGMS) as amended by revised Federal Circular 74-4, A-122, A-128 and A-133; *Uniform Grant and Contract Management Standards Handbook*; *Texas Department of Health Travel Allowance Guide*; TDH Operating Procedure OP-1651; OMB Announcement 300 and Supplemental Guidance.

DEFINITION OF TERMS USED IN THIS POLICY

Claimant	An organization, or a volunteer of an organization, which is filing a voucher for reimbursement of costs associated with activities of the organization.
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Contract administration agency	An administrative agency for consortia, or banker organization for coalitions, which is responsible for administering the funds from which the consortium or coalition are generally reimbursed. The funds are used to conduct planning and priority setting activities for local prevention and services programs.
Documentation	Written details of actions or activities which serve to substantiate decisions or claims.
OMB Circulars	Documents used by the Federal Office of Management and Budget to establish the principles for determining allowable costs. The circulars may contain stricter state annotations detailing the types of expenses that are allowed or disallowed and provide affected organizations with direction on how to account for the funds received through contracts involving federal money.

REASONS FOR A REIMBURSABLE COST CLAIM

Volunteers of organizations engaged in planning HIV/STD prevention and services activities may be required to travel to various sites to attend meetings or similar activities. Consortia and CPGs may also ask members of the organization to take part in activities that will enhance the ability of the member to participate effectively in organizational work. Service providers may use volunteers to provide services to clients. To take part in the activities, the volunteer will be required to pay in advance for costs associated with the activities. It is also probable that volunteers who provide direct services for the organization may incur costs that are reimbursable through a contractor or TDH.

BASIC CRITERIA RELATED TO REIMBURSABLE COSTS

To be reimbursable, the cost must:

1. be reasonable;
2. conform to the limitations or exclusions outlined in the OMB circulars or in the contract/agreement with TDH;
3. be consistent with practices found in the OMB circulars and TDH policy;
4. be treated the same every time;
5. be documented as required by TDH, and
6. be documented by original receipts and receipts marked paid in full unless specified otherwise.

WHAT IS CONSIDERED TO BE A REASONABLE COST

The cost is to be evaluated as to whether:

1. it was ordinary and necessary for the consortia, CPG or contractor volunteer;
2. it was spent for goods or services received that were accepted as sound business practice;
3. the individual who incurred the cost acted reasonably and responsibly in the situation considering their responsibilities to the consortia or CPG, and
4. the cost was consistent with the services provided by a volunteer.

Questions about any costs not covered in OMB circulars or in policies established by TDH or the contract administration agency should be referred to the TDH designated co-chair or consortium chairperson before the cost is incurred. Volunteers providing services should check with the contractor.

REIMBURSEMENT PROCESSING BY THE CONTRACT ADMINISTRATION AGENCY

Advance travel costs

Contract agencies or the contract administration agency may provide advance travel costs to volunteers. The volunteer must submit documentation for review by the contract administration agency or contractor after the travel. Unexpended portions of the travel advance and expenditures which lack sufficient documentation must be repaid.

Processing reimbursement forms

The contract administration agency or contractor accepts completed reimbursement forms from claimants and is required to check each form and supporting documentation to insure completeness and accuracy. The reimbursement forms are submitted to the consortia chairperson or CPG co-chairs for approval. In the case of volunteers providing services, their reimbursement forms go directly to the contractor for review.

The contract administration agency is responsible for submitting a contract expenditure voucher, which includes the amount of their reimbursement to volunteers, to TDH. The contract administration agency may either pay the claimant at time of request or after receiving reimbursement for the expenditure from TDH. It is advisable to inform the claimant prior to their incurring costs whenever the latter is the standard practice.

CONSORTIA/CPG RESPONSIBILITIES

The consortium chairperson or CPG co-chairs are required to review and approve each reimbursement form submitted by the volunteer for reimbursement of costs associated with a consortia or CPG activity. Consortia or CPG approval indicates the expenditure

1 was incurred for valid activities. Only the contract administration agency may authorize
2 the expenditure and reimbursement.

3 A chairperson or co-chair may not approve their own request for reimbursement.
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5 REIMBURSEMENT RATES 6

7 Reimbursement rates for consortium or CPG activities may be established by the
8 contract administration agency. Volunteers who provide direct service to clients should
9 also be reimbursed according to preestablished reimbursement rates. These policies
10 must conform to applicable OMB circulars principles for allowable costs. When the
11 contract administration agency does not have established rates and policies related to
12 travel expenses, the TDH Travel Policy is used to reimburse claimants and the TDH
13 rate of reimbursement is followed.
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15 FREQUENCY OF SUBMITTING REIMBURSEMENT REQUESTS 16

17 TDH recommends that the contract administration agency accumulate approved
18 reimbursement forms and submit a voucher to TDH no less than on a monthly basis.
19 Contract administration agencies are encouraged to follow this process to avoid last
20 minute problems or delays in reimbursing volunteers.
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22 FINANCIAL RECORD KEEPING 23

24 The contract administration agency and contractors must maintain appropriate files and
25 documentation of all expenditures. State and federal audits and/or financial compliance
26 monitoring activities are conducted to ensure that all areas of financial accountability are
27 properly implemented, monitored and maintained.
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29 Costs that are questionable or are not properly documented may be deemed to be
30 unallowable at a later time. Should this occur, the auditing agency may require a refund
31 of those costs to the state or federal government, and may require corrective action
32 and/or impose a sanction to insure proper future accountability.
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